

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2015– 2016

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	History
Subject(s):	History
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Medieval Studies
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	MA

Name and home Institution / affiliation of Examiner

Completed report

The completed report should be attached to an e-mail and sent as soon as possible, and no later than six weeks after the relevant meeting of the Board of Examiners, to exexadmin@leeds.ac.uk.

Alternatively you can post your report to: **Head of Quality Assurance**
 Room 12:81, EC Stoner Building
 The University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards

Matters for Urgent Attention

If there are any areas which you think require urgent attention before the programme is offered again please note them in this box

Only applicable in first year of appointment

Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?

Yes I was provided with previous relevant reports and the School's response.

For Examiners completing their term of appointment

Please comment on your experience of the programme(s) over the period of your appointment, remarking in particular on changes from year to year and the progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision, on standards achieved, on marking and assessment and the procedures of the School

Standards

- 1. Please indicate the extent to which the programme Aims and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) were commensurate with the level of the award**
 - *The appropriateness of the Intended Learning Outcomes for the programme(s)/modules and of the structure and content of the programme(s);*
 - *The extent to which standards are appropriate for the award or award element under consideration.*

All modules I saw in had appropriate learning outcomes and were well structured. Particular thought had gone into the structuring of the Latin modules around a particular student's disabilities.
- 2. Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?**
 - *The comparability of the programme(s) with similar programme(s) at other institutions and against national benchmarks and the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications.*

This programme is fully comparable with similar programmes I am aware of at other institutions.
- 3. Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs**
 - *The design and structure of the assessment methods, and the arrangements for the marking of modules and the classification of awards;*
 - *The quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods that may be indicated by student performance.*

Assessment methods allowed all Learning Outcomes to be fully tested. Modules were marked with care and the dialogue between first and second markers was thoughtful and clearly set out for me to follow. Students were able to produce a high level of work, and to demonstrate original thought as well as to look at areas of history from new angles. This demonstrates the quality of teaching in the School.
- 4. Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the Aims and ILOs?**
 - *The academic standards demonstrated by the students and, where possible, their performance in relation to students on comparable courses;*
 - *The strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort.*

Students were given full opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the aim of the modules. In particular the ability in some modules to follow one's own interests gives the students a valuable opportunity.
- 5. For Examiners responsible for programmes that include clinical practice components, please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum**
- 6. Please comment on the nature and effectiveness of enhancements to the programme(s) and modules since the previous year**

It would be particularly helpful if you could also identify areas of good practice which are worthy of wider dissemination.

This is my first year of examining so this question is not relevant.
- 7. Please comment on the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching**

This may include examples of curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research.

It was clear, particularly in MA modules, that staff research fed into the modules offered and that students responded to this by producing carefully nuanced and perceptive pieces of work.
- 8. Where the programme forms part of an Integrated PhD, please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD**

For Examiners involved in mentoring arrangements

- 9. If you have acted as a mentor to a new External Examiner or have received mentor support please comment here on the arrangements**

The Examination/Assessment Process

- 10. The University and its Schools provide guidance for External Examiners as to their roles, powers and responsibilities. Please indicate whether this material was sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner.**

Whether External Examiners have sufficient access to the material needed to make the required judgements and whether they are encouraged to request additional information.

Yes, I received sufficient material to act within my role.

11. Did you receive appropriate documentation relating to the programmes and/or parts of programmes for which you have responsibility, e.g. programme specifications or module handbooks, marking criteria?
The coherence of the policies and procedures relating to External Examiners and whether they match the explicit roles they are asked to perform.

Yes I received all appropriate programme documentation, in particular I received module handbooks and marking criteria.

12. Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments? Was the nature and level of the questions appropriate? If not, were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments?

Yes I was provided with all draft examination papers and found the nature and level of the questions to be appropriate. The process for making comments had I wished to was clear.

13. Was sufficient assessed / examined work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work? Were the scripts clearly marked/annotated?

Scripts were clearly marked and annotated and I received enough work to be confident in evaluation.

14. Was the choice of subjects for dissertations appropriate? Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate?

The choice of dissertation subjects which I examined were appropriate. Students had followed their own strengths, sometimes with very great success.

15. Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Board of Examiners? Were you able to attend the meeting? Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Board?

I was not able to attend the meeting

16. Were appropriate procedures in place to give due consideration to mitigating circumstances and medical evidence?

Other comments

Please use this box if you wish to make any further comments not covered elsewhere on the form

Leeds is well known for its medieval history and its medieval studies programmes and the quality of the work which I saw this year fully bears out its reputation.

From:
Sent: 27 January 2017 11:49
To:
Cc:
Subject: External Examiner's Report

Dear

Many thanks for your external examiner's report on our MA in Medieval History. I would like to thank you very much for your considerable efforts on behalf of the School, it is greatly appreciated.

I was pleased to read your very positive comments about this degree programme - in particular the care that colleagues put into marking work, and the ways in which the dialogue between first and second markers made your job easier.

I am also very pleased to note your observations about the quality of work that our students produce, and the central role that colleagues' own research interests play in the modules that we offer.

Finally, I am glad that our administrative processes appear to have worked efficiently.

With all best wishes,

Professor of Modern History
Head of School
School of History
University of Leeds